

Strategy Research Project International Fellow

The Role of the National Joint Headquarters of Norway

by

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United States Army War College
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THE ROLE OF THE NATIONAL JOINT HEADQUARTERS OF NORWAY

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ABSTRACT

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THE ROLE OF THE NATIONAL JOINT HEADQUARTERS OF NORWAY

On 21 August 2009 the National Joint Headquarters (NJHQ) was officially opened in Bodø, Northern-Norway by Minister of Defense Anne-Grete Strøm-Erichsen. In her speech she emphasized the different roles for the NJHQ: situational awareness, conduct day to day operations, support and monitoring deployed forces, and plan and conduct major exercises, Home Land Security, and defense support of civilian authority. She placed particular emphasis on the government's priority to the High North:

Primarily climate change, resource and energy issues are at the heart of the High North initiatives. Also in the North we may more clearly than elsewhere experience that civil challenges can assume security political character. It is in the High North that we can see increased competition for strategic resources. It is in the North we have unsettled boundary issues.¹ It is in the High North global climate change will make the extraction and transport of energy in the Arctic an even more central issue in the future. And we have no right to overlook the fact that an increasingly self-assertive Russia still concentrates much of its military force in our region.²

Norway has the responsibility for vast areas in the High North. The resources these areas hold and the activities that are conducted in the region are of great importance to Norway. A hundred years ago the High North was accessible only to explorers and polar expeditions. During the Cold War it became a focal area for the military standoff between the West and the East. Today's increased attention on the High North, and possible improved accessibility, was the backdrop for the Defense Minister's speech.

For the moment, industrial war is a distant memory in Northern Europe. Military power is only one of several instruments of the state in the framework of Diplomatic, Informational, Military and Economic resources (DIME). War has not changed but the context of war is dramatically different from that of the Cold War. However, for a

headquarters like NJHQ, the issues look familiar. The role of the NJHQ is a matter of observing, of supporting, of linking and of explaining, to transform strategic objectives, to build situational awareness, to manage tension, and to guide tactical level units.³ This paper will analyze the role of the National Joint Headquarters of Norway as a joint headquarters at the operational level of war. The aim is to show that the NJHQ contributes in a unique manner to the overall management of the Norwegian Armed Forces in its two main capacities of national defense and contributions to international operations.

The Norwegian Armed Forces has a peacetime strength of approximately 23,000 personnel organized in three Services and the Home Guard.⁴ The support organization in the armed forces includes the Defense Logistics Organization and the Norwegian Intelligence Service. The Chief of Defense (CHOD) is responsible for all activities of the Norwegian Armed Forces (NAF). He exercises his responsibilities through the DEFSTAFF. On behalf of the CHOD, Commander NJHQ is responsible for the conduct of operations.

Since 2003 Norway has had an integrated Ministry of Defense (MOD) and DEFSTAFF.⁵ At the time Norway established its joint headquarters, the headquarters had an independent role from the MOD and the DEFSTAFF. As a result of the integration and the transformation of the Armed Forces, the chain of command and its independent role have changed. Some may argue that the military domain and its chain of command has developed from a “professional military domain” to an area that in many ways is managed in a day to day fashion by the politicians like a political “hot spot”.⁶ The changes can in part be explained by effects from new public management

(NPM) reforms such as the introduction of management by objectives, performance management, and Balanced Scorecard (BSC).⁷ In addition, a slow but necessary transformation of the Norwegian Armed Forces changed the size and the role of the command structure. The change is partly due to an evolution in the political attention to the field of defense and security politics as a result of the shift from anti-invasion defense planning to incident management. As a result of these developments, one could argue that today's military leadership seems to have "a great deal of responsibility but a minimum of power".⁸

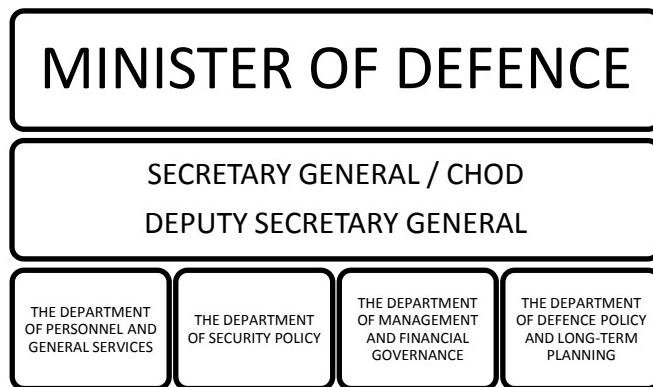


Figure 1 – The Integrated Ministry of Defense⁹

The political aim of the integration of the MOD and the DEFSTAFF is to ensure a "better match between political decisions and their implementation".¹⁰ The MOD is a Government Office encompassing a staff of approximately 350, and is responsible for formulation and implementation of defense and security politics and policies. The integration of the CHOD in the MOD ensures a coherent execution of the strategic functions of the MOD. The CHOD is the head of the Armed Forces, and is also a part of the MOD organization. In effect, his resources for long-term planning and strategic guidance rest within the four Departments of the MOD. The DEFSTAFF is a staff of approximately 180, and is primarily organized for short-term implementation, planning,

and budgeting.¹¹ This focus on management and programmatic means that the NHQJ is required to perform many of the functions that the US Joint Staff performs. NJHQ contributions to maintaining the CHOD's situational awareness and supporting the development of strategic assessments are examples.¹²

The organizational change of the Norwegian military's strategic level reflects an understanding of the internal and external situation and a changing role of military force and military power in the post Cold War era. Entering the 21st century, the global confrontation of the Cold War has been replaced by a situation where regional issues inform strategy to a larger extent and thus provide context for conflicts and the use of military resources.¹³ Today's geopolitical situation is by no means final. Cunningham and Mackinder argued that "people live on land" and that land is "key to national prosperity and power".¹⁴ This does not mean that the sea, airspace, space, or cyberspace are unimportant. But it does imply that the basic elements in the geopolitical system like geography, culture, social conditions, and even energy and climate issues are prone to have a significant effect on people and on future conflicts, crises or wars. The influence and importance of land are defining geopolitical factors for Norway, as is its reliance upon the maritime domain for much of its national resources and prosperity.¹⁵ Norway's self-image as a steward of the sea is closely knit to a maritime identity. Additionally, there is a strong political and commercial push for an Arctic identity linked to two defining geopolitical elements—Norway's land territory including the Svalbard Archipelago, and Norway's vast ocean areas. For the Norwegian Armed Forces, and therefore for the NJHQ, this dilemma is evident in the missions and tasks it

is set to perform. At a more general level this tension has been a defining factor in the overall formulation of Norwegian interests.

NATO and the trans-Atlantic relation are the cornerstones of Norway's defense and security policy. There are no fundamental differences between the basic defense and security challenges of Norway and its European neighbors. Norwegian and European Union security policy are more aligned today than they were 10 years ago.¹⁶ Norway has made most of the changes to align policies, with a comprehensive security focus replacing the territorial defense focus of the Cold War. Additionally, Norway understands the need for a combined civilian-military approach to security issues. Many of these changes have contributed to a smaller NJHQ with a more distinct civil-military relation.¹⁷ Norway has a long term commitment to contribute resources to NATO, UN, EU, and other coalition operations, and defense and security initiatives. This supports the overall Norwegian defense and security priorities.

The geopolitical context is changing in Norway's near abroad and the implications will be felt in the NJHQ. Elements that are visible today include a global focus switching to Asia, the effects of national and global financial challenges, and a changing US policy towards Europe. At least two major issues can influence the NJHQ in the near term. First, it is possible that developments in the High North can lead to an increased attention to the region. Second, as NATO continues its post Cold War transformation it looks for new initiatives to strengthen its near abroad competence.¹⁸ These two issues can have a number of implications for the NJHQ. An increased commercial and military presence in the High North may expose new fault lines that were not visible in the post Cold War period. There are likely to be increased conflicts of

interest in the High North particularly in a period of declining European economy. The initiative for a more structured relationship with NATO has potential for increased attention to the Area of Interest for NJHQ but will also require a NJHQ that meets NATO's expectations.

What are Norwegian interests and how do they materialize as responsibilities for Commander NJHQ? Norway has a foreign policy based on interests and values defined in six areas: security, engagement, economy, energy, climate and environment, and international organization.¹⁹ There is a broad bi-partisan agreement on the main features of Norwegian Foreign Policy within the Norwegian political landscape. At the same time there is an acknowledgement that the advancement of Norwegian national interests requires a “whole of government approach” with contributions from a variety of Ministries and government agencies. None of the six defined policy priorities are the primary responsibility of the Armed Forces. The next section of this paper identifies how the Norwegian Armed Forces support the six national priorities, how the Armed Forces are tied into the overall Foreign Policy, and how NJHQ links military activities to the overall strategy.

The MOD’s Strategic Concept, “Capable Force”, lays out the desired national end state and describes ways and means by which the Norwegian Armed Forces (NAF) shall contribute to achievement of the national objectives in support of the overall national interests.²⁰ The main purpose of the Armed Forces’ is to contribute to the “security of the state, its people and the society, and to protect and promote our interests and values”.²¹ The various tasks given to the Armed Forces reflect the role

(means and ways) of the Armed Forces in support of Norwegian national objectives (ends). In general terms the tasks of the Armed Forces are:

National tasks which, as a general rule, must be undertaken nationally and without Allied involvement:

Task 1: To ensure a good basis for national political and military decision-making through timely surveillance and intelligence.

Task 2: To uphold Norwegian sovereignty and sovereign rights.

Task 3: To exercise Norwegian authority in designated areas.

Task 4: To prevent and manage incidents and crises in Norway and adjacent areas.

Tasks carried out in cooperation with Allies and/or Partners:

Task 5: To contribute to collective defense of Norway and other parts of NATO against threats, assault or attack.

Task 6: To contribute to multinational crisis management outside Norway, including peace support operations.

Other tasks which are under the responsibility of other Norwegian authorities, with the NAF in a supporting role:

Task 7: To contribute to international military cooperation, including prevention of proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), disarmament, arms control and support to security sector reform.

Task 8: To contribute to societal security and other key societal tasks.

Tasks 1-6 will determine the development of the NAF's structure and force posture.²²

NJHQ was established to perform the tasks of the operational level of warfare in translating military strategy into activity. One of the headquarters' primary tasks is to provide connection between single activities and overall objectives. This paper argues that, even though the theory that first defined the operational level has its roots in war, the functions described are, in fact, being performed by the NJHQ today. It was the Soviet military theorist Aleksandr Andreevich Svechin that recognized a level of

warfare between the tactical level and the military-strategic or strategic level²³. In his work, Svechin was influenced by the First World War and other European history, by experiences of Japan and the United States, and by Clausewitz's theory that war and military activities are a continuation of politics²⁴. Based on his observations and studies of history and strategy he created the term "operational art" as the bridge between tactics and strategy. Svechin's work described operational art as the means by which a senior commander transforms a series of tactical successes into operational "bounds" linked together by the commander's intent and plan, in order to contribute to strategic success in a given theater of military actions.²⁵This function of linkage is also discussed by Bruce Menning in his 1997 paper "Operational Arts Origin".²⁶ He attributes the "three-part understanding" of war to Svechin: "Tactics makes up the steps from which operational leaps are assembled. Strategy points out the path".²⁷

In his 2002 paper "Linkages Between the Concept of Operations and the Operational Level of War," Second Lieutenant Arild Kubban argues that the purpose of operational art is to "pursue strategic (and political) objectives, its scope is cognitive tension, its main attribute is situational awareness, its primary task is to archive synergy, and its product is the campaign plan."²⁸

Abstract or visionary strategic objectives are interpreted or transformed into tactical missions and directives through the optimal application of operational art. This ensures that individual tactical actions and tactical level activities are carried out with a purpose to support the strategic objective.²⁹

In 2007 the DEFSTAFF issued the Norwegian Armed Forces Joint Operational Doctrine describing the three levels of war, plus a fourth level, the Political Strategic

level representing the Government.³⁰ The Norwegian Joint Doctrine places NJHQ at the operational level of war consistent with the role that was established when the first Norwegian joint combined headquarters was stood up in the early 1970s.

Level	Area of responsibility	Organization
Political strategic	Design and specify the political objectives; provide limits and allocate resources; coordinate civilian and military means	Norway – The Government NATO – North Atlantic Council (NAC)
Military strategic	Produce relevant force; provide professional military advice to the political level; coordinate all military means; maintain cooperation with civil authorities and organizations	Norway – CHOD NATO – Supreme HQ Allied Powers Europe
Operational	Constitute the link between the political / military strategic level and the tactical level; operationalise political objectives to feasible plans and operations	Norway – National Joint HQ NATO – Joint Forces Command (JFC)
Tactical	Solve concrete, tactical tasks related to the operational objectives	Norway – Tactical staffs NATO – Component Commands

Figure 2 - Levels of war with corresponding Norwegian and Allied Institutions³¹

NATO doctrine describes operational art as a valid function in the 21st century, even though its ideas are based on:

force-on-force operations, the concept is equally applicable to contemporary operations in which crisis resolution does not necessarily hinge on military success. It embraces a commander's ability to take a complex and often unstructured problem and provide sufficient clarity and logic (some of which is intuitive) to enable detailed planning and practical orders. It is realized through a combination of a commander's skill and the staff-assisted processes of Operational Design and Operational Management.³²

AJP-01's broad, comprehensive understanding of operational art and its link to the operational level of war makes it possible to gain a greater understanding of the role of NJHQ. Halvor Johansen describes the developments that supported the establishment of the operational level in Norway from 1970 to 2000.³³ His assessment of the buildup of a joint combined headquarters seems valid but he stops short of

discussing the feeling of urgency and real risk resulting from the Cold War. The situation in the 1970s and 1980s represented a complex joint combined planning and execution task, involving large forces from multiple nations and cooperation across the whole of the Norwegian government. The military and political complexity demanded an organizational approach that could pursue political and strategic objectives and tie resources, time and space, risk and the activities of tactical level formations together. Contrary to Johansen's and Macgregor's claims the operational level of war did not go away as a result of the "Revolution in Military Affairs" and other changes.³⁴ NJHQ in the post Cold War period remains a way to maintain the capability and the capacity to conduct joint operations.

NJHQ is directly subordinate to the CHOD. With assigned forces, Commander NJHQ has the authority and responsibility to plan and execute operations in his Command Area (Area of Operations).³⁵ He exercises Operational Control (OPCON) over assigned forces, is the Supported Commander, and has Coordinating Authority for tasks he has been directed to execute. NJHQ is responsible for the deployment and the redeployment of Norwegian Forces to operations outside Norway, and for monitoring their employment. The responsibility includes ensuring that national and international employment of Norwegian Armed Force contributes to the fulfillment of military strategic and strategic objectives.³⁶

NJHQ directs the assigned tactical level units of the Services and the Home Guard. NJHQ is organized with a J-code staff of approximately 300 personnel.³⁷ There is no component command level headquarters in the Norwegian Armed Forces; rather, related issues are handled by small Service staffs in the NJHQ J3 (see Figure 3).

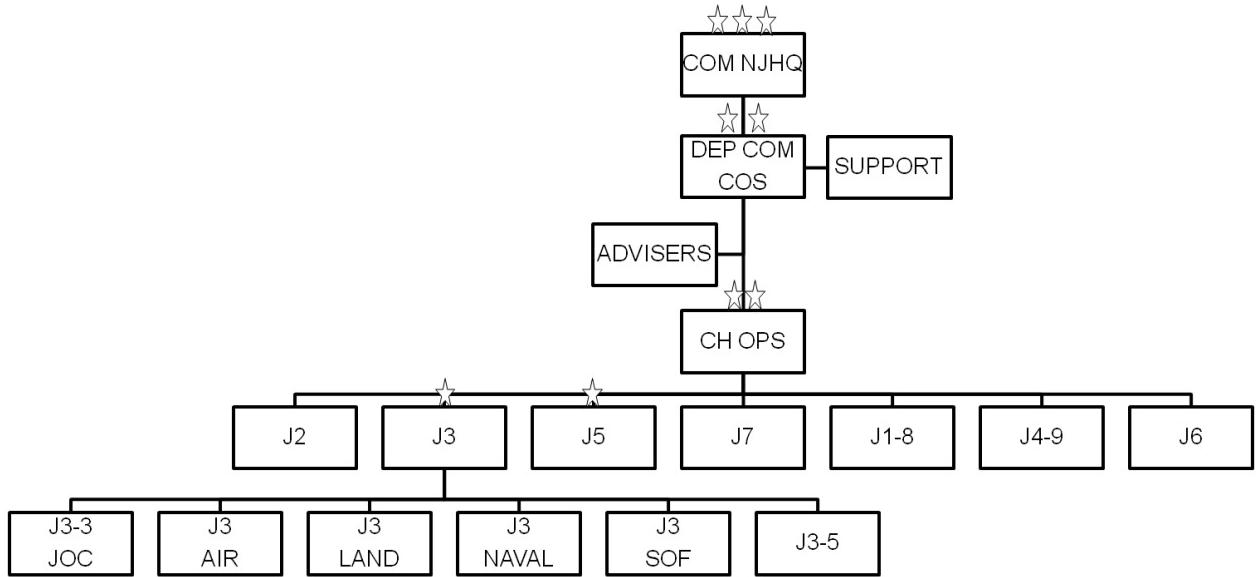


Figure 3 - Organization of the NJHQ

NJHQ is located at Bodø, Northern-Norway “in the interest of the High North’s significance”.³⁸ NJHQ is a visible government presence in the High North providing a signal that Norway is a responsible actor in the region. The headquarters is an element of national policy by virtue of its geographic location and its role. A former commander has described the primary role of NJHQ to be a headquarters for the operational forces and to support the development and improvement of operational capabilities. The Commander NJHQ’s mission also includes exercising overall command and control of operational activities in times of peace, cooperating with other government agencies, managing national crises and providing for the collective defense together with NATO. At the same time he is the “primary advisor” for the CHOD in operational matters.³⁹ The NJHQ mission and implied tasks can be broken down into two distinct areas: the situation in and around Norway; and the Norwegian international engagement resulting in deployment of units for missions abroad. To cover these areas NJHQ transforms the intended strategic concept into orders to individual units.

In the land domain, COM NJHQ commands the Border Guard Battalion and His Majesty the Kings Guards on their primary missions.⁴⁰ In addition he directs the eleven Home Guard Districts, tactical level headquarters equivalent to a regiment, with land, naval and air force elements.⁴¹ In the air and maritime domains COM NJHQ assumes command over allocated forces in the framework of “Operation Norway,” the overall plan for the defense of Norway’s territorial integrity.⁴² This may include a naval vessel on patrol in the Skagerrak or a Maritime Patrol Aircraft on a mission in the North Sea. NJHQ directly supports training and readiness in the Air Force and Navy by assuming command over vessels and aircraft on training missions. Under normal circumstances NJHQ operates without activating tactical level commands, but tactical level commands like Norwegian Task Group or Brigade North may be activated, depending on the scope and complexity of a specific situation. The tactical level of command for the air domain is permanently integrated in NJHQ, in accordance with the principles of “centralized direction and decentralized execution”.⁴³ NJHQ constantly interacts with the DEFSTAFF, the Services, and other supporting organizations to execute operations, plan and conduct national and multinational exercises, support and monitor out of country missions, and support defense activities in support of civil authorities.⁴⁴

NJHQ transforms the strategic tasks given in “Capable Force” to missions and orders, activities and initiatives through “Operation Norway.” The Area of Responsibility for COM NJHQ covers the whole territory of Norway including islands, adjacent waters, and sovereign airspace, and is currently characterized as calm, stable, and peaceful.⁴⁵ Ongoing operations support decision-making through surveillance and uphold Norwegian sovereignty and sovereign rights. NJHQ supervises other operations that

exercise Norwegian authority in designated areas or work on long-term relations with partner headquarters in neighboring countries in order to be positioned for crises management. NJHQ operates at the operational level of war through planning and executing these operations, observing and analyzing strategic objectives, and transforming “a series of tactical success into … strategic success”.⁴⁶

A part of the NJHQ mission is focused on the alliance, on partners and on contributions outside Norway. As the organization primary tasked with planning for and conducting large Field Training Exercises in Norway, NJHQ supports capacity and capability building in the Norwegian Armed Forces and the armed forces of participating nations. This has relevance for both collective defense and crises management. In recent years COM NJHQ has planned and conducted large joint combined exercises such as EODEX 2011, FLOTEX SILVER 2011, SAMARITAN 2011, EX POMOR 2011 and COLD CHALLENGE.⁴⁷ NJHQ is responsible for the planning cycle and the execution of such exercises, to include the development of an appropriate scenario, planning the exercises support, and manning a directing staff or an exercise control organization. Based on the scenario the headquarters might have to develop a Joint Force Commander’s Concept of Operation and populate the database that supports the event-driven play in the exercise area.

NJHQ is responsible for planning deployments, sustainment, and redeployment of forces on operations outside Norway to meet strategic guidance. After Transfer of Authority to a Force Commander such as COM ISAF, NJHQ exercises national command authority (Administrative Control).⁴⁸ Activities to support this national command authority might include monitoring adherence to Rules of Engagement and

monitoring operations. NJHQ also provides logistical support, conducts rotation of units or staff officers, and ensures that Norwegian policies are being adhered to by the Norwegian unit and/or by the Force Commander. Force contributions that NJHQ may command can vary from a few staff officers on an EU, NATO, or UN mission to a Field Hospital to Chad. For example, in 2011 NJHQ deployed and redeployed six F-16s to and from Crete in support of Operation Unified Protector over Libya.⁴⁹ NJHQ also deployed and redeployed a Maritime Patrol Aircraft to and from the Seychelles in support of anti-piracy operations. This was in addition to supporting contributions that have been running for many years, such as ISAF and UNMIS. NJHQ works on ROE issues, understands and monitors targeting, exercises Administrative Control, deals with sustainment issues, and coordinates and plans on behalf of the DEFSTAFF and in support of the Armed Forces.

In the area of defense support of civilian authority, NJHQ has a distinct role. The integrated MOD and DEFSTAFF has assumed a strategic function, leaving NJHQ as the link between the strategic objectives and the individual elements of support⁵⁰. NJHQ pursues a comprehensive approach in cooperating with other national partners in the operational role in defense support to civilian authorities. NJHQ supports police authorities, regional government, maritime authorities, health authorities, and others, and enables them to better perform their tasks.⁵¹ NJHQ can contribute to strategic situational awareness by providing information from a Home Guard headquarters. NJHQ can recommend appropriate or feasible military contributions after dialogue with the Services. NJHQ searches for synergy inside the Armed Forces and from other government agencies. In providing support to the other agencies of the government,

NJHQ will develop a support plan that ensures execution in a way that contributes military forces and military activities to the fulfillment of the strategic objectives. There are many examples of NJHQ being central to supporting civilian authorities to include extreme weather, wild fires, floods, environmental disasters, and terror attacks. In almost all of the mentioned incidents military support has been perceived as critical and very supportive. Each situation was unique and no textbook solutions existed, requiring that NJHQ use operational art to develop appropriate solutions.

Defense support of civilian authority also crosses international borders. Sweden, Finland, Russia, Norway and other neighboring countries exercise civil emergency options, search and rescue, and other crisis scenarios.⁵² The NJHQ has, as an operational headquarters, an important role in supporting the responsible government agencies or in being the partner headquarters for an institution in another country.

The NJHQ performs a variety of operational tasks that are supportive of each other and that support COM NJHQ in building and maintaining a professional headquarters. Different planning tasks enhance basic planning skills and contribute to the capability of the headquarters. At the same time logistical considerations and limitations from exercises give insight into real-life sustainment issues. Situation awareness, reporting procedures, tension and limitations must be mitigated. And the different “tactical successes must be transformed into … strategic successes”.⁵³ NJHQ, a fairly small headquarters, tightly controlled by an integrated civilian-military strategic level in a politically prioritized region, is responsible for all aspects of executing the military strategy of Norway.

The last part of this paper will seek to discuss in broad terms three elements relative to the future of the operational level of war in Norway, and of NJHQ. The first issue is the location of the headquarters and the relevance of a separate operational level headquarters. The second issue is the ambition for a joint headquarters that performs its tasks by coordinating vertically and horizontally to achieve a whole of government approach. The third issue deals with ways to improve the quality of the headquarters.

NJHQ has demonstrated its efficiency, but its existence as an independent headquarters and the location of the headquarters has been under debate. The location of NJHQ in Bodø is a double edged sword. The headquarters is a good distance away from most other government agencies, the Services and higher headquarters. To some extent this can be mitigated with modern technology, though the distance from the populated part of the country remains a challenge for the headquarters.⁵⁴ However, it is clearly advantageous for NJHQ to be present in the High North as a symbol to partners and neighbors as well as other government agencies and private sector actors. The geographical location of the headquarters provides “in theater” qualities for many of its primary tasks. Any alternative to today’s organization must consider the dual requirements for NJHQ to be an effective operational headquarters while simultaneously supporting political priorities as they relate to the High North and to the near abroad initiative. In 2009 Johansen saw a further consolidation of NJHQ to a geographical location closer to the DEFSTAFF and the integrated MOD as “not unlikely”.⁵⁵ However, based on the political initiatives that have been taken over the last years, any alternative that does not support the Norwegian government’s High North

policy and near abroad initiatives is unrealistic. As expressed by a former Defense Minister at the opening of NJHQ, “in the North we may more clearly than elsewhere see that civil challenges can assume a political character.”⁵⁶ Any substantial change to location or organization could have the effect of placing these initiatives in a somewhat peculiar light. At present the only geographical location for NJHQ that meets the political ambitions and the expectations created by them is the current location in Bodø.

NJHQ is an integrated headquarters under political control and not an independent headquarters with a “vertical autonomy” like during the Cold War. The civil-military relationship has the potential to cause friction but is also a very important part of the political-military context for the operational level headquarters in Norway.⁵⁷ NJHQ performs its duties in an integrated manner vertically and horizontally. NJHQ is a joint headquarters in the respect that there are joint functions in the headquarters and the headquarters commands units from all Services. However it is marginally joint, for two reasons. First, the limited volume of the Norwegian Armed Forces limits the possibilities for joint planning and operations. Second, the headquarters is not adequately manned to carry out and support in depth all functions that a joint campaign requires. There is a breaking point where a joint headquarters ceases to be joint because it is too small. To some extent the size of the headquarters can be expanded through augmentation. On the other hand, a joint headquarters should reflect the size of the Armed Forces and thus the national ambition. This dilemma has both political and military implications and will likely influence the level of ambition for the headquarters and the scope of its continuous transformation. Based on the Norwegian political initiatives that describe the role of NJHQ and other regional headquarters in the NATO chain of command there is

an implicit level of ambition that sets the course. First, the NJHQ must be resourced adequately to maintain its joint capacity and remain an operational level headquarters. Second, and depending on the development of the level of ambition, the NJHQ must acquire competence and infrastructure to meet the expectations. The ambitions are unclear but can range from a structured exchange of operational information between NJHQ and NATO, via a more formalized coordination that can include cooperation on training and exercises, to an ambition where NJHQ becomes an integrated part of the NATO Force Structure.⁵⁸

NJHQ has been in development since it was established and this transformation is likely to continue. A way to improve NJHQ is by implementing organizational change. There is debate about whether the security challenges of the 21st century require a fundamentally different organization of headquarters. A former Commander of the NJHQ has stated that there are viable alternatives to a classical J-code organization. A headquarters organization based on a more “network-centric” approach that addresses knowledge development could provide the NJHQ with renewal.⁵⁹ A word of caution is appropriate. Organizational changes can be perceived as beneficial but can have secondary effects outside the organization itself and influence the ability to interact in a crisis situation.⁶⁰ NJHQ should continue to adapt itself and ensure that organizational developments are done in an evolutionary manner. Concepts that are chosen to guide any change process should come from “main stream” conceptual sources of military thinking. This will safeguard necessary modernization and at the same time ensure that NJHQ continues its development in a way that finds resonance in the Services of the Norwegian Armed Forces as well as among partners and allies.

Linked to the organizational development of NJHQ is the function of doctrine and documentation. Although the Norwegian Joint Doctrine from 2007 supports NJHQ in its role, there are few publications that describe the operations of the headquarters. Further, there is a dearth of procedural documents that deal with the interaction between the strategic and the operational level. The lack of documentation is an issue with broader implications and includes the apparent inability to capture lessons learned.⁶¹ One consequence of this can be that the full potential of NJHQ is not utilized and that there is loss of knowledge, effectiveness, and of precision. Doctrine is an accumulation of knowledge. The Norwegian Armed Forces need an updated joint doctrine. An updated doctrine will offer NJHQ insights into theories that support the way it operates and guide the development of the headquarters in its role as a joint headquarters at the operational level of war. It is the responsibility of the DEFSTAFF to ensure that there is sufficient doctrinal support for NJHQ and the Joint Force to function and develop. An updated doctrine must cover the political ambitions in the High North as well as the near abroad initiative NJHQ can also become more effective as a headquarters by encouraging academics to study the headquarters. Some work has been done in this field but the topics have mostly been related to larger political issues and issues with security political implications.⁶² The DEFSTAFF should contract or direct studies on how NJHQ actually works: headquarters processes and procedures, models and concepts for exercise planning, and how NJHQ operates in its intergovernment role. The potential for lasting improvements to the Armed Forces is clear—with only one Joint Headquarters at the operational level its development and condition is of great importance to the entire Norwegian Armed Forces.

This paper began with a discussion of the geopolitical context of Norway and its implications for NJHQ, and ends with recommendations for improving the overall effectiveness of the headquarters. The role of NJHQ has been discussed in the framework of the Norwegian National Security Organization. An important premise for NJHQ is its relation to the integrated MOD through the DEFSTAFF. The paper developed an understanding of the operational level and argued that the theory of operational art is relevant for understanding NJHQ as a headquarters at the operational level of war in 2012. NJHQ is tasked with the mission of connecting strategic objectives and tactical activities. The paper also explored how NJHQ conducts its mission and how it interacts within the Armed Forces, with the rest of the Norwegian government and with allies and partners. With its limited military structure, Norway does not have many alternatives for managing the operational level of war. Although factors such as NATO's focus, civil-military relations and technological advances are important, this paper has argued that NJHQ was and is defined by more than those factors.⁶³

In addition to its role as a headquarters, NJHQ is in itself an element of Norwegian defense and security politics. The location of the headquarters is an expression of Norwegian commitment and resolve to remain a responsible steward and a credible actor in the High North. Today NJHQ does not operate in a “politics-free zone” but presents itself as a well-integrated modern government institution actively coordinating and contributing, horizontally and vertically.⁶⁴

As we have seen in the description of how NJHQ works, who it supports, and how it ties strategy to activity, NJHQ has many roles. The NJHQ has geographical as well as functional responsibilities for the Joint Force in Norway. It performs all of the

functions of operational art described by Kubban – it pursues strategic objectives, administers tension, delivers situational awareness, seeks synergy, and produces guiding documents. Though NJHQ does not fight wars and is possibly further away from war now than when it was established 40 years ago, it is suited to Norwegian ambitions and the limited size of the Norwegian Armed Forces. Despite its size NJHQ is a fairly strong joint headquarters benefiting greatly from daily interaction with tactical level units from all Services, from being involved in large exercises on a routinely basis and from collaborating extensively across a wide sector of the Norwegian Government and the private sector. The paper has developed recommendations in three areas. First, given the importance of the High North in Norwegian politics, there is no realistic alternative to the current location of the headquarters. Second, the role of NJHQ in the near abroad policy requires a growth in the size and composition of the headquarters. And finally, NJHQ must be supported by functional and up to date joint doctrine and have a system to capture lessons learned.

Menning observes that “concepts are based on ideas, and ideas over time can be picked up, dropped and either reborn or refashioned to suit fresh circumstances and changed situations.”⁶⁵ This paper has advanced the position that even though NJHQ does not fight wars; it operates at the operational level of war, carrying out the functions of a headquarters positioned between tactics and strategy. With the recommended improvements described in this paper, the National Joint Headquarters can continue to be a key to the success of the Norwegian Armed Forces being able to meet strategic objectives in support of Norwegian interests.

Endnotes

¹ An agreement on this issue was signed between Russia and Norway on September 15, 2010 and went into effect July 7, 2011. <http://www.regjeringen.no/nb/dep/ud/kampanjer/delelinje.html?id=614002> (accessed 11 March, 2012).

² Former Minister of Defense Anne-Grete Strøm-Erichsen in speech in Bodø August 21, 2009 http://www.regjeringen.no/nb/dep/fd/aktuelt/taler_artikler/ministeren/forsvarsminister-stroem-erichsen/2009/apning-av-forsvarets-operative-hovedkvar.html?id=574260 (accessed January 14, 2012). If not otherwise noted the translations from Norwegian to English are made by the author.

³ Bruce W Menning, "Operational Art's Origins," *Military Review* (Sep/Oct 1997): 35.

⁴ The Norwegian Army is based around an independent mechanized brigade, two independent battalions and a Special Operations Command. The Navy operates frigates with helicopters, submarines, fast patrol boats, Coast Guard cutters, mine hunters and sweepers and has a Naval Special Warfare Group. The Air Force operates combat aircraft (F-16), maritime patrol aircraft (P-3 N/C), transport aircraft (C-130J), various types of helicopters (SAR, maritime, utility) and air defense (NASAMS II). <http://mil.no/organisation/about/Factsandfigures/Pages/default.aspx> (accessed January 14, 2012).

⁵ The integrated and collocated MOD and DEFSTAFF established in 2003, is, in principle, very similar to the organization established in 1814 based on the new Constitution. The Ministry for War Administration (Departementet for Krigs-Administrasjon) was an integrated military strategic and political strategic organization and functioned until 1940. There is, in fact, a longer history of integration at the strategic level than of separate strategic level institutions. Gjert Lage Dyndal, *Strategisk Ledelse i Krise og Krig* [Strategic Management in Crisis and War] (Bergen: Fagbokforlaget, 2010), 115-117.

⁶ Heidi Kristin Teien Austad, *Forsvaret – mellom fag og politikk: En studie i utviklingen av maktrelasjonen mellom fagmilitær og politisk forsvarsledelse, 1990–2005* [Norwegian Armed Forces – Between Profession and Politics, a Study in the Development of Power Relations between the Profession of Arms and Political Defense Management 1990-2005] (Bergen Norway: Universitetet i Bergen, Institutt for arkeologi, historie, kultur- og religionsvitenskap, 2010), 107, <https://bora.uib.no/bitstream/1956/4136/1/69631731.pdf> (accessed February 27, 2012).

⁷ Balanced Score Card (BSC) is a tool developed to measure strategic performance. New Public Management (NPM) is a philosophy developed to support the transformation of public sector. In her thesis Teien Austad argues that the introduction of management tools like BSC, management by objectives and performance management was done to increase the level of political influence in the government and thus in the Armed Forces. Teien Austad, *Forsvaret* [Norwegian Armed Forces], 11-12.

⁸ Ibid., II.

⁹ Norwegian MOD organization, <http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/fd/the-ministry/organisation/organisation-chart.html?id=406> (accessed December 18, 2011) and <http://www.vg.no/nyheter/innenriks/artikel.php?artid=10070172> (accessed Marc 11, 2012).

¹⁰ Det Kongelige Forsvarsdepartement, *Et forsvar til vern om Norges sikkerhet, interesser og verdier: Iverksettingsbrev for Forsvarssektoren (2009-2012)* [The Royal Ministry of Defense, A Defence for the Protection of Norwegian Security, Interests and Values: Implementation Letter for the Defense Sector (2009-2012)] (Oslo: Det Kongelige Forsvarsdepartement, July 7, 2008), 24, http://www.regjeringen.no/upload/FD/Dokumenter/IVB_LTP_2009-2012_%20Endelig.pdf (accessed 27 February, 2012).

¹¹ Det Kongelige Forsvarsdepartement, *Iverksettingsbrev for Forsvarssektoren* [Implementation Letter for the Defense Sector], 25.

¹² Forsvarsstaben, Operasjonsavdelingen, *Planlegging og gjennomføring av operasjoner på militærstrategisk nivå, nødhjelp for planleggere på strategisk nivå*, Draft [Norwegian Defense Staff, Operations Division, Planning and Implementation of Operations on Military Strategic Level, Aid for Planners at the Strategic Level] (Oslo: Forsvarsstaben, Operasjonsavdelingen, December 7, 2011), 8-9.

¹³ Halford J Mackinder, *Democratic Ideals and Reality* (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 1996), xv.

¹⁴ G.K. Cunningham, "Landpower in Traditional Theory and Contemporary Application," *U.S. Army War College Guide to National Security Issues*, 3rd ed., Vol. I: *Theory of War and Strategy*, ed. J. Boone Bartholomees, Jr. (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, June 2008), 109.

¹⁵ Colin Gray, *Modern Strategy* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1999), 212.

¹⁶ Nina Græger, "Inside NATO – Outside the EU: Norwegian Security and Defence Policy in the High North," National Defence University Department of Strategic and Defence Studies Series 4: Working Papers No 32, Maanpuolustuskorkeakoulu Strategian Laitos (Helsinki, 2009), 2-3, https://www.doria.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/74143/StratL4_32w.pdf?sequence=1 , (accessed 27 February 2012).

¹⁷ Halvor Johansen, *The Rise and Decline of the Operational Level of War in Norway* (Oslo: Norwegian Institute for Defense Studies, Defense and Security Studies, 2009), 76, http://brage.bibsys.no/fhs/bitstream/URN:NBN:no-bibsys_brage_19550/1/DSS-2_2009.pdf (accessed February 25, 2012).

¹⁸ Norway has been a proponent in NATO for a return of competence and attention to NATO's near abroad. "Last but not least, Norway has been a driving force for that our own near abroad - the High North - now gets more attention than just a few years back. This is in line with our own near abroad initiative, in which Norway has been an advocate for increased attention to all NATO member states' near abroad, be it around the Baltic Sea, the Black Sea, the Mediterranean Sea or the High North." Former Minister of Defense Grethe Faremo in speech October 20, 2010, http://www.regjeringen.no/nb/dep/fd/aktuelt/taler_artikler/ministeren/taler-og-artikler-av-forsvarsminister-gr/2010/natos-naromrader-og-kjerneoppgaver.html?id=621467, (accessed February 25, 2012). This initiative was also covered in Det Kongelige Utenriksdepartement, *Stortingsmelding nr. 38 (2008-2009) Om samarbeidet i NATO i 2008* [On collaboration in NATO in 2008] (Oslo: Det Kongelige Utenriksdepartement, May 15 2009), 29, <http://www.regjeringen.no/nn/dep/ud/dokument/proposisjonar-og-meldingar/stortingsmeldingar/2008-2009/stmeld-nr-38-2008-2009-.html?id=561589> (accessed 25 February 2012). For fiscal

year 2012 the near abroad initiative was covered in the budget proposal for the MOD. Chapter 2, *Security Policy* makes multiple references to the initiative. Det Kongelige Forsvarsdepartement, *Prop. 1 S, Proposisjon til Stortinget FOR BUDSJETTARET 2012* [Proposition to the Storting FOR THE BUDGET YEAR 2012] (Oslo: Det Kongelige Forsvarsdepartement September 16, 2011), 27, http://www.regjeringen.no/pages/35167299/PDFS/PRP201120120001_FDDDDPDFS.pdf (accessed 25 February, 2012). Græger, also discusses the effect this initiative can have on the alliance in Græger "Inside NATO," 13.

¹⁹ Det Kongelige Utenriksdepartement, *Stortingsmelding nr 15 (2008-2009) Interesser, ansvar og muligheter, Hovedlinjer i norsk utenrikspolitikk* [The Royal Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Report No. 15 to the Storting (2008-2009) Interests, Responsibilities and Opportunities, The Main Lines of Norwegian Foreign Policy] (Oslo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, March 13, 2009), 10-12, <http://www.regjeringen.no/nb/dep/ud/dok/regpubl/stmeld/2008-2009/stmeld-nr-15-2008-2009-.html?id=548673> (accessed 25 February, 2012).

²⁰ "The term strategic concept is similar to the term used by NATO in its corresponding concept (The Alliance's Strategic Concept). The term used by EU in its overarching document is "Security Strategy" (A Secure Europe in a Better World: European Security Strategy), which comprises EU's common security and defense policy (ESDP). However, this document has a wider scope, as it also describes EU's foreign policy and the use of, *inter alia*, economical and diplomatic instruments. The corresponding US document (The National Security Strategy of the United States of America) is published by the White House. The term strategic concept is chosen in this document, since it in a better way indicates that the document is focused on the guidelines for, and the use of military instruments." Norwegian Ministry of Defense, *Capable Force, Strategic Concept for the Norwegian Armed Forces* (Oslo: Ministry of Defense, November 13, 2009), 8, http://www.regjeringen.no/upload/FD/Dokumenter/Capable-force_strategic-concept.pdf (accessed February 25, 2012).

²¹ Det Kongelige Forsvarsdepartement, *Iverksettingsbrev for Forsvarssektoren* [Implementation Letter for the Defense Sector], 9.

²² Norwegian Ministry of Defense, *Capable Force*, 8-11.

²³ Aleksandr A. Svechin, *Strategy* (Minneapolis, Minnesota: East View Publications, 1992), 55-56.

²⁴ Arild Bondø Kubban, *Operasjonskunst og sammenhengen med operasjonskonsept og det operasjonelle nivå - norsk forståelse?* [Operational Art and the Connection to Operational Concepts and the Operational Level - A Norwegian Understanding?] (Oslo: Krigsskolen, December 18, 2002), 8.

²⁵ Svechin, *Strategy*, 38.

²⁶ Menning, "Operational Art", 35.

²⁷ Ibid., 35 and Svechin, *Strategy*, 269.

²⁸ Kubban, *Operasjonskunst* [Operational Art], 54.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Forsvarsstaben, *Forsvarets fellesoperative doctrine* [Norwegian Armed Forces Joint Operational Doctrine] (Oslo: Forsvarsstaben, June 15, 2007).

³¹ Ibid., 31-32.

³² North Atlantic Treaty Organization, *Allied Joint Doctrine*, AJP-01(D), (n.p: December 2010), 5-8.

³³ Johansen, *The Rise and Decline*, 69-77.

³⁴ Both Johansen, *The Rise and Decline*, 76-77 and Douglas A. Macgregor, "Future Battle: The Merging Levels of War," *Parameters*, 22, no 4 (Winter 1992-93), 33, more or less predicted the merging of the levels of war to the effect that the operational level of war would become less visible. For a further discussion of why this anticipated development did not occur see Egil Daltveit, Jan Fredrik Geiner and Palle Ydstebø *Trender i militære operasjoner* [Trends in military operations, Norwegian Defence Research Establishment] FFI-rapport 2010/00692 (Kjeller: Forsvarets forskningsinstitutt, April 26, 2010), 25-29. Also see Antulio J. Echevarria II, *Fourth-Generation War and Other Myths* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: US Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, 2005) although he does not address the operational level specifically.

³⁵ His area of operations [command area [kommando område]] includes all of the Kingdom of Norway including the islands of Jan Mayen and the Svalbard Archipelago with air space and territorial waters. For the purposes of exercising authority, sovereignty and asserting the sovereign rights his authority also extends to the Exclusive Economic Zone and the Continental Shelf. *Forsvarssjefen, Instruks for sjef Forsvarets operative hovedkvarter* [Instruction for Commander National Joint Headquarters] (Forsvarssjefen, Oslo: August 1, 2009), 1.

³⁶ Ibid., 1-2.

³⁷ Tore Svendsen, *Forsvarets rolle ved sikkerhetspolitiske kriser i nordområdene* [The role of the Norwegian Armed Forces During a Crisis of National Security] (Oslo: The Norwegian Defence College, 2009), 36, http://brage.bibsys.no/fhs/bitstream/URN:NBN:no-bibsys_brage_16719/1/Svendsen%20Tore.pdf (accessed February 25, 2012).

³⁸ Det Kongelige Forsvarsdepartement, *Stortingsproposisjon 48, Et forsvar til vern om Norges Sikkerhet, interesser og verdier* [Recommendation to the Storting 48, A Defence for the Protection of Norway's Security, Interests and Values] (Oslo: Det Kongelige Forsvarsdepartement, March 28, 2008), 95, <http://www.regjeringen.no/nb/dep/fd/dok/regpubl/stppr/2007-2008/stppr-nr-48-2007-2008-.html?id=504783> (accessed February 25, 2012).

³⁹ Bernt Iver Ferdinand Brovold, "Forsvarets operative hovedkvarter - konsentrasjon og fornyelse" [National Joint Headquarters - Concentration and Renewal], lecture in Oslo Military Society, April 12, 2010, 2, http://www.oslomilsamfund.no/oms_arkiv/2010/2010-04-12_Brovold.html (accessed February 25, 2012).

⁴⁰ His Majesty the King's Guards is located in Oslo and tasked with the ceremonial duties at the Royal Residences. In the North East, the Border Guard Battalion at the Garrison of South-Varanger is operating on the border to Russia.

⁴¹ A brief description of the Norwegian Home Guard is found at <http://mil.no/organisation/about/homeguard/Pages/default.aspx>. A overview of the organization is found at <http://forsvaret.no/om-forsvaret/organisasjon/heimevernet/om-heimevernet/Sider/om-heimevernet.aspx> (accessed January 16, 2012).

⁴² Brovold, "Forsvarets operative hovedkvarter" [National Joint Headquarters], 3-4.

⁴³ Forsvarets operative hovedkvarter, *Ledelseskonsept* [Leadership Concept], 7.

⁴⁴ NJHQ plays an important role in the preparation and conduct of major exercises. <http://mil.no/exercises/Pages/exercises.aspx> (accessed January 16, 2012). Also Commander Norwegian Joint Forces Leadership Concept illustrates this. "To help optimize the utilization of Defense's total resources, there must be a clear connection between exercises and the prevailing operational concepts and plans. It must therefore be an integrated development of the CHODs training program where the operational requirements are governing. Exercises should be planned by NJHQ in close cooperation with Services. An effort should be made to include tactical commanders in the planning phase of both exercises and operations." Forsvarets operative hovedkvarter, *Ledelseskonsept* [Leadership Concept], 3-4.

⁴⁵ Brovold, "Forsvarets operative hovedkvarter" [National Joint Headquarters], 4.

⁴⁶ Svechin, *Strategy*, 38.

⁴⁷ For an overview of exercises see <http://forsvaret.no/aktuelt/ovelser/Sider/ovelser.aspx> (accessed January 17, 2012).

⁴⁸ Forsvarsstab, *Forsvarets fellesoperative doktrine* [Norwegian Armed Forces Joint Operational Doctrine], 181 and 178.

⁴⁹ For an overview of deployed Forces see <http://forsvaret.no/operasjoner/operasjoner-i-utlandet/Sider/default.aspx> (accessed January 17, 2012).

⁵⁰ Patricia B Flakstad, *Forsvarets strategiske krisehåndteringsapparat - Utfordringer og muligheter* [The Armed Forces strategic crisis management apparatus - Challenges and opportunities] (Oslo: The Norwegian Defence College, 2007), 66-71, http://brage.bibsys.no/fhs/bitstream/URN:NBN:no-bibsys_brage_21172/1/Patricia%20B%20Flakstad%20-%20ubegrenset.pdf (accessed 27 February, 2012).

⁵¹ Brovold, "Forsvarets operative hovedkvarter" [National Joint Headquarters], 3.

⁵² John Espen Lien, "Når krisen rammer" [When crisis hits], *Forsvarets Forum*, October 2011, 94-95, http://www.fofo.no/forsvaretsforum.no/filestore/FNR10_OKT2011.pdf (accessed 27 February, 2012).

⁵³ Kubban, *Operasjonskunst* [Operational Art], 8, 54.

⁵⁴ Examples of government agencies the NJHQ interact with are the Police Directorate (Oslo), The Norwegian Radiation Protection Authority (Oslo), The Directorate for Civil Protection and Emergency Planning (Tønsberg, South of Oslo), The Norwegian Coastal Administration

(Ålesund, West Norway). NJHQ has a national responsibility and although many organizations have regional representation in the North, NJHQ needs to interact at a national level.

⁵⁵ Johansen, *The Rise and Decline*, 76-77.

⁵⁶ Former Minister of Defense Anne-Grete Strøm-Erichsen in speech in Bodø August 21, 2009, http://www.regjeringen.no/nb/dep/fd/aktuelt/taler_artikler/ministeren/forsvarsminister-stroem-erichsen/2009/apning-av-forsvarets-operative-hovedkvar.html?id=574260 (accessed January 14, 2012).

⁵⁷ Johansen, *The Rise and Decline*, 69-74.

⁵⁸ Stein Garang and Paal Hilde “NATO's nye kommandostruktur og FOH” [NATO's New Command Structure and NJHQ], *PRO PATRIA* no 1 (2012): 54.

⁵⁹ Brovold, ”Forsvarets operative hovedkvarter” [National Joint Headquarters], 5.

⁶⁰ As USSOUTHCOM was responding to the Humanitarian Crises in Haiti in January of 2010, the Commander reorganized this HQ back to a J-code HQ a few days into the crisis. The HQ was organized with directorates and this organization made integration of rapid reinforcements a challenge. US Joint Forces Command Joint Center for Operational Analysis, *USSOUTHCOM and JTF-Haiti... Some Challenges and Considerations in Forming a Joint Task Force* (Norfolk: US Joint Forces Command Joint Center for Operational Analysis, June 24, 2010), 4.

⁶¹ Flakstad, *Forsvarets strategiske krisehåndteringsapparar* [The Armed Forces strategic crisis management apparatus], 41 and 49.

⁶² Jens Inge Hyndøy, *Hvordan skapes felles situasjonsbevissthet i norske hovedkvarter?* [How to Create Shared Situation Awareness in Norwegian Headquarters?] (Oslo: The Norwegian Defence College, 2008) and Skjalg Romundset, *Etterretningens bidrag til kunnskapsbygging ved Forsvarets Operative Hovedkvarter* [Intelligence Contribution to Knowledge Development at the National Joint Headquarters] (Oslo: The Norwegian Defence College, 2011) are among the few products that deal with processes internal to the NJHQ.

⁶³ Johansen, *The Rise and Decline*, 6.

⁶⁴ Hew Strachan, “The Lost Meaning of Strategy,” *Survival* 14, no. 3 (Autumn 2005): 47.

⁶⁵ Menning, “Operational Art”, 46.

